

to resolve this issue was to do a very good job for the Army. There is a basic difference between the civil and the military work. The Chief must remember, and I think, promote rather than ignore or suppress the difference. “Vive la difference.” We had much work to do within the Army, as will come up later.

***Support the Nation***, our other customers. That led us into the international program and an improved position with the Air Force and other elements of the Executive Branch.

***Get OCE out of the Operations Business***. I thought OCE had to take care of policy and the world outside the Corps. The divisions and the districts could handle operation with good staff work and the support of OCE.

You may remember there was an exodus of people out to the Humphreys Engineer Center-to the Kingman and later the Casey buildings. We set up the Water Resources Support Center and the Facilities Engineering Support Activity. The headquarters became more active in policy and the coordination activities which the districts couldn’t do. That would turn out to be a much more significant goal in 1980 than I had ever thought.

Those were the four things that were to require most of my time. If we did all those, that would be enough. As time passed, those goals affected many day-to-day decisions.

Those were published the 15th of July, and every field activity put together measurable objectives to support the four goals. I implemented the four goals early because I wanted to give the Corps direction. Fortunately, a couple proved to be crucial to our future when the



*Major General Charles I. McGinnis, Division Engineer, Southwestern Division (left) and Major General John W. Morris, Deputy Chief of Engineers (center), participated enthusiastically in the dedication parade in Ponca City, Oklahoma, for Kaw Dam, 1976.*

Democratic Administration and its philosophy towards the Corps settled into place in early 1977.

An early requirement was to select a deputy. That crucial decision proved to be more of a challenge than I had anticipated. There were many outstanding choices, but I needed to find a man with strengths in areas where I had weaknesses or limited experience.

I listed the areas where I did not feel I needed deputy strength and the areas where I thought I needed an experienced second-in-command. I then reviewed each major general of the Corps without concern about seniority. After analyzing each person's strengths against the weaknesses in my experiences, I chose Bob Marshall, Major General Robert C. Marshall.

Bob had been senior to me until that moment I became Chief of Engineers and a year ahead of me at the Military Academy. Bob had an outstanding background in military duties, in special weapons, in the space program at that time. He knew the Army staff very well. He had a good solid background in civil works, which I didn't need, but in the Mobile District he had a large military construction program which I considered valuable. I asked Bob if he'd take the job, and he said he would take it if after one year he could become president of the Mississippi River Commission and division engineer of the Lower Mississippi Valley Division. On that basis, I accepted him. I know I picked the right man. Perhaps I should not have agreed to the one year, because that led to his leaving at a time when I wished I could have kept him. We made a good team, I think.

I also had to select an executive. Colonel Lamp agreed to stay, but he didn't want to stay too long. Russ Lamp was rock solid. He was an aggressive and extremely capable person. I ultimately selected Roger Peterson to take Russ's job. My secretary in Civil Works had been Jeanine **Huffman**, and I considered her briefly for the Chief's secretary position. I elected to keep Helen Velsmid, General Gribble's secretary.

Q: Did you have a civilian assistant to the chief of staff at that point?

A: Yes, Jack Quinn. Actually, Russ Lamp selected him. Jack had a lot of growing up to do in that job, which he did. Now I suppose Jack is looked upon as an old head that knows everything about everything, but he had to start off just like everybody else. I can honestly tell you that-he'll tell you- the first year or so wasn't easy for him. I didn't lack for ideas of things I wanted to do, and many, particularly internal stuff, drifted down to him to execute. So Jack had his hands full.

Q: What about the major directorates?

A: Civil Works was headed up at that time by Ernie Graves. Bates Bumell was the director of Military Construction. Walt **Bachus** was the director of Facilities Engineering. Major General George Rebh was still there in the Postal Program-not a directorate.

Manning Seltzer headed Legal and Woody Berge was in Real Estate. Woody and I had known each other since I was in Tulsa. I'd known Manning since then also. I had to replace them all, though, during my term. Who else? What else did I miss? Personnel was Bob Jacobs, but he was getting ready to leave. I think Ralph Loschialpo was either in the saddle or getting pretty close.

Public Affairs was Bob Benning and then Sam Kern.

Q: Had the Resources Management Directorate been established?

A: I established that.

**Q:** You established that. So there was still the old comptroller's office. We do need to talk about that.

**A:** Comptroller was Ted **Geesay**. Later I changed it to the Resources Management Office. Bill Taylor was running Research and Development. All these people've mentioned, every one of them would depart shortly after I became Chief. So I had almost a clean sweep of decisions to make on personnel. Maybe they all decided once I got in, that it was time to leave.

Once into the job, an early requirement was to communicate with the district/division engineers face-to-face. We met **regionally**.

At the end of 45 days I was able to put on paper the issues which I thought were causing difficulty in implementing the goals. So by the 1st of September, things had settled down quite well. We'd tried very hard to make the change quickly and get on with our work because we had so much to do, and besides, the presidential elections were coming in November.

The Chief of Staff of the Army passed from General Weyand to General Bernard Rogers, my classmate from the Military Academy. We had known each other over the years.

As the election campaign warmed up, candidate Carter made some strong statements about the Corps, and I began to realize that we were going to have trouble if Carter was elected. So we began to prepare for that possibility.

Unlike earlier reorganization plans for the Executive Branch, this one would be a little different, because the president personally had made a statement that he was going to do something adverse to the welfare of the Corps. Under earlier reorganization schemes, the director of Civil Works usually became the action officer and, as mentioned earlier, he was the one that put his career on the line in case something went wrong. The idea was to insulate the Chief.

In this particular case, there would be no alternative but for the Chief of Engineers personally to become involved in developing a plan to stay in business.

Well, as you know, Jimmy Carter was elected. I had probably, along with a lot of other people, misinterpreted the public's will, intent, and it was only in the last days of the campaign that we began to realize President Carter would probably make it, or had a good chance of making it. So we began to plan how to react should he implement his campaign promises to put the Corps of Engineers out of business. That occupied a lot of my thinking in the early days.

Shortly after the election, the Chief of Staff of the Army had his annual commanders conference. The commanders sat with the Chief of Staff at the table. The staff along the back normally didn't say anything unless they were asked to or a subject came up which was their principal area of interest and responsibility. I was prepared to make a comment if I could get an opening, but none came so I took the initiative and asked if I could present an issue I considered important to the Army. General Rogers said, "Yes, go ahead."

I then mentioned to the **Army** staff that I had a real problem because the new president of the United States had said he was going to put the Corps of Engineers out of business-out of the public works business. I stressed that such was not in the best interests of the Army or the country, but the president was our commander. My plan was to convince him, by good works, that his plan was not the best thing to do. I stressed that I could use the Army

commander's support, but I certainly didn't need any distractions. I indicated my hope that the Army staff would support us in our initiatives to keep this mission with the Army for the good of the Army. Otherwise, I'd appreciate it very much if they would refrain from making adverse comments and just let me fight my own battles in my own way.

I was extremely pleased and relieved when every senior general in the Army supported the Corps' keeping the civil works mission. I had some concern that the Army leaders and the staff would not understand the value of the civil mission to the Army. I soon realized the senior people in the Army did understand. General [Robert] Shoemaker, Forces Command; Kroesen, Vice Chief of Staff; and General [John] Vessey, CG VIII Army, had seen the Corps at work and knew the Corps' efforts in the public arena and how well we had handled ourselves with the leaders of communities. **Their** response and that of all commanders was most supportive and valuable. No doubt there are problems at the colonel, lieutenant colonel, or maybe the brigadier general level, but not to the senior people who've seen the Corps at work nationally.

After the meeting, I was walking down the hall with General Rogers to thank him for letting me have a chance to make the pitch. Also, I wanted to review the Army's position. In the course of that discussion, he indicated he felt the Corps should be a major command and asked my thoughts. I agreed and was asked to put together a recommendation.

By this time, we had established the Resource Management Office as a general officer position. I wanted a general in there, so I'd brought in somebody I thought would be a general, and that was Morelli, Don Morelli. Don was an excellent commander and overall an outstanding Corps of Engineers officer. He'd been a district engineer and a regimental commander at Fort Leonard Wood. He was a go-getter, highly regarded, had a lovely wife and beautiful family. Morelli was given the job of putting together the paperwork necessary to get the Army's approval to make the Corps of Engineers a major command.

Ultimately, I had to go see General Kroesen, Vice Chief of Staff. This process took quite a few months. General Fritz Kroesen asked me, "Do you really want to do this?" I said, "Yes." He asked, "Why?" I said, "Well, I've given it a lot of thought and I think there's more pluses than there are minuses." I said, "It may be a little awkward at first because the Army's got to accept this, but in the long run it recognizes the fact that the Chief of Engineers is a commander and gives him a clearer voice within the Army where he needs it." He approved.

Then we had to develop command insignia. Also, we needed a crest. We had a contest for the crest, and after a lot of disappointments, a handicapped employee from the Kansas City District came in with a proposal. It was beautiful, and we adopted it.

We had a lot more trouble getting the patch worked out, though. I gave General **Bachus** the job. He developed a family of patches. Ernie Graves had moved up to be deputy, so this was during late summer 1977, and I gave them to Ernie to look over. I didn't especially like any one of them, but I didn't want to disapprove them out of hand, so I asked Ernie if he'd take a look at them. About ten minutes later he came back in with a design he had drawn up and which we adopted. That was quick.

There was one thing, however, about the patch. It looks a lot like the 20th Brigade patch. As you recall, I'd commanded the 18th Engineers, and for a moment my reaction was to make it look less like the 20th Brigade patch. I decided I shouldn't get personal about this thing so I left it alone. I did, however, mention to Ernie that he obviously had been in the 20th Engineer Brigade.



*General and Mrs. Morris cut the cake at the Corps of Engineers' 205th anniversary at Ft. Belvoir, Virginia, in June 1980. The new unit crest for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as a major Army command is in the background.*

**Q.** Dealing with a new president who had criticized the Corps was a major challenge, wasn't it?

**A:** We were really greatly worried because, as with most presidents, it's difficult for a new administration to fill all key positions. We didn't know who was going to be Secretary of the Army for quite a while. Near the inauguration time, President Carter selected Clifford Alexander, a Washington attorney, to be the Secretary of the Army. The Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works became Mr. Blumenfeld, who with Secretary Alexander proved to be a good team for the engineer community.

I continued General Gribble's practice of having the Chief deal with the Secretary and the director of Civil Works deal with the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works. Mr. Alexander actually knew very little about the Corps at the outset. He was a lawyer and had his own agenda. He was very strong on suppressing discrimination, fostering equal rights, and promoting equal opportunity.

An opportunity to deal directly with the president on major Corps issues arose quickly. I had been in New York around the 16th or 17th of February. On returning to D.C. I had a phone call awaiting at the airport. My secretary advised me I was to be in the president's office at



*LTG John W. Morris, Chief of Engineers; Clifford Alexander, Secretary of the Army; MG Ernest Graves, Director of Civil Works; and President Jimmy Carter at a meeting in February 1977 to discuss the President's "hit list" of water resource projects.*

1600. This was about 1430. I said I would go home and put on a new uniform and asked if the Secretary of the Army was involved. She said she didn't know. I asked her to check with the secretary's office and then to call me at home if he wanted to give me any instructions. So I went home and was changing clothes when the phone rang. The secretary said he knew about the meeting and would like me to pick him up at 1530. We went together. On the way over, he asked if I knew what it was all about. I said I wasn't sure, but guessed it had something to do with the "hit list" that we'd been hearing and reading about in the paper. So we discussed the secretary's options and his best position.

I told him that we had been trying since I was in Civil Works to get the Congress to direct the Corps to review every one of its projects to see if they met the environmental criteria. The idea was that we would like to get the constant hassle about previous decisions behind us so we could dedicate our efforts to future work. I felt the hit list approval would work only if the president asked the Congress to approve the approach.

Secretary Alexander again discussed what he should tell the president if he was asked to comment. I recommended he tell the president that if he wants to stop projects or if he wishes to set new criteria, that he do it in conjunction with the appropriations cycle, which would start a couple of months henceforth and continue for a couple of months. In this manner the subject would be aired in the Congress, and everybody would know what the president was doing. Of course, this would delay the process several months, but he would then have a clear shot.

Well, when we got to the president's conference room, the table was full of people. On the right of the president was Secretary [Cecil] Andrus, the Secretary of the Interior, and next to him was Secretary Alexander, and then so forth and so on. I was sitting directly across from the president. General Graves, director of Civil Works, was with me that day.

The comments went around the table. First, the president asked Secretary Andrus what he thought about his plan to stop some projects. Andrus suggested sending up one and see what happened. He came to Secretary Alexander, who said, "Well, we should do this but in conjunction with the appropriations cycle, so everybody knows what's going on and there's no surprises to the Congress."

To Secretary Andrus the president indicated that it was not his intent to just send up a trial balloon, and to Alexander he indicated, it meets the objectives but takes too long. He didn't want to wait but wanted to do this now and make an impact.

I was the last one and when asked if I had any comments I noted, "It sounds to me like there is a list of projects." Besides the newspaper accounts, I'd never seen such a list. So President Carter said there was and for me to see it. Mr. Bert Lance went out and brought in a list, gave it to me, and I looked it over. There were 19 projects, as I recall, 11 of which were Interior and 8 or 9 were ours. I reviewed the projects on the list. As it turned out, the Corps had planned to recommend minimum or no funding for all except two projects. The two projects were the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway and the Red River Waterway.

I suggested he drop the two navigation projects because his criteria didn't apply. His criteria were to retain only those projects that had immediate benefits and also meet all the environmental criteria. I stated that the navigation projects may meet the environmental criteria but they rarely give immediate benefits. Navigation tonnages have to build up over a long period of time, unlike flood control, where you can get benefits at once.

The president agreed and indicated we probably should review his list.

Then I noted that one project in California provided electric power and they were having an energy crisis. This could create a political problem because of its need. He said, "Thank you very much," and then announced that, "Anybody who wants to challenge any of these projects or add to it may do so, but I want this list ready to go and to include a requirement to review all other unlisted public works projects not completed." President Carter departed.

So the next thing I knew, somebody was leaning over my shoulder. It turned out to be Mr. Burt Lance. "General," he said, "you made a very good impression on the president with your presentation. You seem to know what you're talking about and he needed that kind of help." So I said, "Well, thank you very much." I wasn't feeling too well that day. I thought I was getting the flu. Well, it turned out I was. Friday I worked half a day and for the only time since 1960 I went home and went to bed.

Saturday morning I stayed in bed and decided to write a letter to the president about the meeting on Thursday. Ms. Velsmid came to my home, and I dictated a letter to the president. The letter basically stated that what he was going to do was necessary and very courageous, but it was going to lead to a lot of problems for him politically because of the sensitivity of those programs to the Congress. I was most supportive of his directive that all projects be reviewed. I said also in the letter that the review, when complete, would have a very positive impact because the Corps of Engineers could then divert its great talent of solving tomorrow's problems instead of just fighting yesterday's decisions. That was the thrust of the letter. I closed with the thought that I wished I had time to sit down and talk to him

because there were so many things that the Corps could do for the future of this country. I mentioned a few in passing. I wished him good luck with his program.

When I got to the office Monday morning, the letter was all prepared. I gave it to Bob Marshall to read and asked for his comments. Bob said, "It's a great letter, Chief, but I wouldn't send it." I asked why not. He said, "Well, you'll probably lose your job." It was a tough situation, but the future of the Corps was at stake, and I felt that made the letter worth the risk. I asked Ms. Velsmid to take the letter to the White House immediately before I changed my mind. I signed it. I did not tell Secretary Alexander or the Chief of Staff. I knew I could not clear the review process quickly and the iron was hot.

We got a call from Jack Watson of the White House staff saying the president would like me to come over and talk to him. I was surprised and also happy. I prepared several talking papers on the Corps' role in recreation, in environment, in water supply, et cetera. I also made a list of things that the Corps could do: the strategic petroleum reserve, mass transportation, improve recreation, the quality of life, conservation, things that I don't remember the details because it's been so long ago now; but at any rate, I went over to see the president well prepared to convince him of the value of the Corps to him and the country. Mr. Watson was present and noted to me that we had about 15 minutes. Well, it took us an hour and a half. Along the way, we got on to the Sprewell's Bluff project, which I knew was the knotty issue underlying his concept and problem with the Corps.

When I was director of Civil Works, Sprewell's Bluff was authorized for a new construction start and carried \$10 million in the budget. The U.S. congressman from that area was Jack Flynt.

While governor, Carter had come out strongly in opposition to the project. As was the practice, the Corps did not start new projects if the governor opposed them. If it was under construction we'd continue, but we would not start. So as director of Civil Works I personally called OMB and asked Don Crable [or Tom Berry] to put that money on another project or distribute it elsewhere.

Then Congressman Flynt wanted a resolution prepared which, if passed by the legislature of Georgia, would override the governor's position. So he asked me if the Corps would draft it for him. I said, "No," because it was not a federal activity and I didn't want to become involved. He then asked if I would review a draft if he prepared it. I said, "I'll read it but only for one **purpose**—to see if it conflicts with any federal regulations." So he drafted it and sent it over. I read it and responded that if it passed, the Corps could perform its role.

So then Flynt sent that down to Georgia. They introduced it in the Georgia legislature, and the majority of the people voting supported overriding Governor Carter, but because of absentees the number who voted did not represent the required majority of the total membership. So the motion failed to carry.

Governor Carter had gotten the idea that the Corps was the bad guy in this, that we had put in the \$10 million, that we had written the legislation, and that we were lobbying against him.

So during our meeting I explained all this to him. He indicated he thought I had written the legislation. I said, "No, Sir, I refused to write it." I said, "I'm also the fellow that took the money out of the budget because as soon as I heard you were against it, I didn't want to push this new start against your wishes as an executive. That's our policy and we used it."





*LTG John W. Morris and President Jimmy Carter  
after a meeting in early March 1977 to discuss Corps' projects and the future.*

We then discussed my ideas of things the Corps might do to support the nation's needs. The meeting ended on a good note. I walked out with Jack Watson, who sat through this whole thing and indicated he thought that was a very interesting meeting. He felt the president must have been interested because he scheduled only 15 minutes and used over an hour.

I subsequently had some confirmation that that was a very good meeting. I also caught hell from the Secretary of the Army. When he found out I'd been over there, I received a call from him with emphatic words to the effect that, "You don't go see the president of the United States without my knowing about it, General." So I said, "Yes, Sir, I'll never do it again."

Well, the sum and substance of it was that the president suggested to his cabinet that they use the Corps of Engineers.

The seeds of success which led to the Corps' not being organized out of business were planted, I believe, during that face-to-face, one-on-one conversation, particularly when we got Sprewell's Bluff clarified. While the Secretary of the Army was upset, and had every right to be, the event happened so early in his tenure that we were able to soften that issue as we accomplished a lot of things together later.

An afterthought-when the president had his open house in January immediately after the inauguration, Vice President [Walter] Mondale said to President Carter, "General Morris and

Mrs. Morris,” and I added “Congratulations, Mr. President, I’m the Chief of the Army Corps of Engineers.” He said, “I know who you are.” I never will forget that, “I know who you are.” All these other things I’ve mentioned follow that.

So that was an early highlight, very important to our first goal of staying in business.

The next event involving President Carter personally occurred in the fall of 1977 when the **Taco** Dam failed in Georgia. You may recall that Senator Stennis, years before, had sponsored successfully the dam safety inspection program [\$100 million]. It’d never been implemented. So when the dam failed down in Georgia, there was another meeting in the president’s conference room on the subject of inspecting the dams and implementing this legislation.

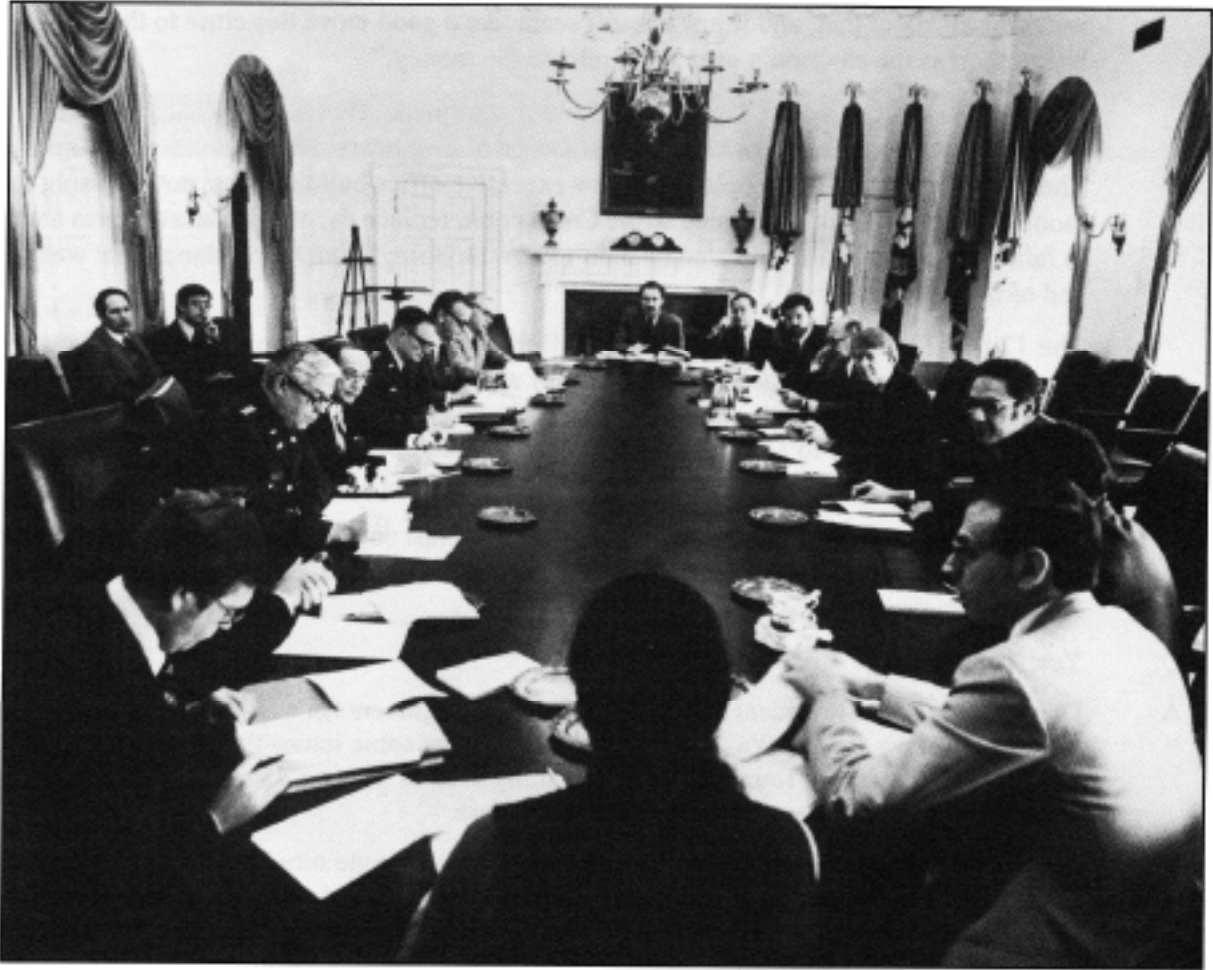
The Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture very much wanted that program and made strong proposals. The program was in the Corps’ bill and budget, so we had a leg up on it. General [Charles I.] McGinnis, then director of Civil Works, was with me this time. The president asked if the Corps could undertake the dam safety inspection process. I indicated we were ready. He then asked when we could start. As I remember, that meeting was conducted about the middle of November. I said, “We’re looking to start around the 1st of April, beginning of the second quarter of the next calendar year. All of our people are busy, and we must issue contracts or we have to take people off of other things.” That’s when he said, “Well, I wish we could start a little quicker.” I responded that we would start the 1st of December.

Back in the office I asked General McGinnis to inspect one dam in each state during the month of December. Why? I didn’t want any governors calling us up and saying, “You did somebody else’s dams, you didn’t do ours.” Besides, we couldn’t do more than **50** in the first month anyhow. That’s what we did and it worked nicely. There were no political ramifications and we did get the program going. Turned out we had a lot bigger job than we thought we would. There were liability issues but we worked through those, and as far as I could tell, the president was satisfied with the program.

The Corps as an institution gathered a lot of international attention from the dam safety program. The chairman of the International Committee on Large Dams [**ICOLD**] asked me to write the protocol for a permanent **ICOLD** committee on dam safety. I formed an ad hoc committee of international engineers and went to work. After two years we finished the job. By then I was retired. I hoped and expected to become the chairman of the international committee on dam safety once it was made permanent; however, the chairman said, “You’re retired now and don’t have anything to do with dams any more, so we’re going to find somebody else to be president.” I was surprised and disappointed.

I was invited to the White House to dinner one evening in honor of the president of Nigeria, who was visiting the United States. President Obasanju was an engineer, and he wanted to make the Niger River navigable up to where a new capital would be built. The United States had been asked to help in the navigation project, so I was invited to the White House for dinner and we spent some time discussing the matter. The project did not materialize.

My last event with President Carter occurred when I was about to retire. I asked my secretary to call the president’s appointment secretary and schedule a farewell visit. The lady said she’d take it down but she didn’t think there was any chance. Word came back that President Carter would like to see me before I left the service and we set the visit for the 17th of September. This time I told the Secretary of the Army I was going.



*A White House meeting presided over by President Carter to discuss dam safety on 28 November 1977.*

We had in the works, at that time, two unique items of interest to the OMB. One was a new airplane for the Corps. The old twin prop G-1 was the oldest of its type flying. We wanted to replace that with a jet, a G-2. The Congress had okayed it but OMB wouldn't release the money.

The other item concerned a new athletic facility at West Point for basketball and ice hockey. Congress had approved a \$5 million supplemental military construction appropriation to meet a cost overrun. OMB claimed President Carter didn't want to release that money because there was too much need in the Army for bullets and rifles and he couldn't, just on the eve of the election, spend \$5 million or more to build a basketball court.

When the word got out about the 17 September visit, the guys in OMB began to wonder what I was going to talk about. They called up and asked, so I indicated, "I just want to go over and say goodbye." The OMB representative then asked if I was going to talk about that airplane. I said, "Oh, I'm glad you reminded me, but I don't know whether I'll talk about it or not." So we started a little game.

For some reason or another I had to go see Mr. McIntyre, Jim McIntyre, the director of the OMB, prior to September 17. While there the basketball court came up and he said, "Well,

we know all about that, and it just doesn't seem like a good move this close to the election, but as soon as the election's over we'll release the money."

On the way out of the office I asked Jim about that airplane. He asked, "What airplane?" So I knew he had not heard about the famous Corps of Engineers request for a new airplane. Then I explained that his people at the new executive office building were not releasing the money Congress had appropriated so the Corps could replace the old airplane that was about to fall apart. So he again indicated he didn't know anything about the airplane. That was the end of that conversation.

The 17th of September was the day after all that trouble in the desert of Iran when U.S. Forces were trying to release the hostages. My appointment was canceled; however, on the day I retired, Mr. McIntyre called and said, "Go buy your airplane, Jack." So that whole scenario about going to see the president created some pluses, even though the visit was canceled.

Well, I've gone all the way from the first day until the last day and haven't even talked about what we started to talk about. I tried to stay on track with my relationship with the White House, a single subject.

**Q:** Yes, that's good.

**A:** I saw quite a bit of President Carter. The Chief of Engineers isn't all that important in the scheme of things around Washington, but we did have some issues that were important to President Carter, and I found that the best thing was to get one's act together and try to arrange to talk about them. It worked out in my case.

I have tried to keep the White House events together as a single subject. The real importance of the visits and discussions with the president and his principal staff was to keep the Corps of Engineers in business. There was no plan or single decision to do that, but the overall impact was positive. When the reorganization of the executive office was finally released, the Corps of Engineers was not mentioned one way or the other. So whether we dodged the bullet or not, I don't know. I'm not even sure one was fired, but we thought the president was taking aim, anyhow.

**Q:** What about your relationship with Congress?

**A:** Now, it might be a good idea to talk a little bit about the relationships with the Congress. The Chief of Engineers was fairly free to deal, within the proper limits, with the Congress. I had a comfortable and knowledgeable association with the committees of Congress and particularly the staffs of those committees. That turned out to be important and valuable, particularly when we got into things like the Tennessee-Tombigbee, the privatization of dredging program, Lock and Dam 26, environment and many, many other subjects with political implications. The Secretary of the Army naturally was concerned because he did not want the Chief or anybody in the Corps lobbying. The fact is we didn't lobby, but there was a perception. In my case particularly, since I had been so closely involved with the members and committee as district engineer in Tulsa, division engineer of MRD, and director of Civil Works.

My objective was to keep Congress informed, and that paid off because later on there were special hearings on whether or not the Corps had been up front with the Congress on various things, particularly Tennessee-Tombigbee. So having and keeping a good relationship with the Congress was almost as valuable as the relationships we had established with the White House. I say "almost" simply because the president as the chief executive could, by executive order, make changes internally which the Congress, of course, could not do summarily.

The idea of getting OCE out of the operations business helped us in OCE devote needed time and our capabilities to dealing with those externalities which were so important to us.

Q: Turning to the Corps of Engineers itself, how did you feel about the internal organization of the agency?

A: The organization of the Corps of Engineers was a delicate issue to the Congress. We should talk about that a little bit because the organization of the Corps of Engineers has been a continuing subject for many years. Joe Tofani and I worked out a plan in 1974 to manage the continental United States with five or six divisions.

We also knew there were districts we didn't need. So the first suggested change in the organization involved the districts. We got slapped around so badly politically we re-evaluated whether or not that was a good idea. We rationalized and concluded that the district distribution was not exactly the way we would want it, but we needed a certain number of districts in any case. The number we had wasn't too bad. While we might make it a little more logical to change them around, we probably wouldn't improve the operation a great deal especially when compared to the pain and cost of moving them. That was our logic train and it's probably true because there's so much political interest in these districts by the local people and by the Congress.

As far as the organization of the offices was concerned, I had always felt that the structure within the division organization was excellent. Not so at the Corps headquarters. The districts were similar to a division with normally a deputy for military, a deputy for civil, with all the other functions in support of the two programs. You didn't have a separate engineering division for military and a separate engineering division for civil.

Since the districts and divisions were organized one way and because OCE was structured differently, communication presented some problems.

My thoughts began in the 1960s, long before I became Chief. Once in OCE, I noted that the civil works organization was a cradle-to-grave kind of thing; whereas, the military program was fragmented between program development, facilities engineering, and military construction. So the idea evolved to combine the related military functions into a directorate similar to the directorate for civil programs. They would be structured the same internally.

Then, with that in place the directors would become program managers. Support activities would be combined into a directorate with a civilian in charge. That was the idea, but there was much work to do before we could get to that point.

First off, we designed the Army Real Property Management Program, which spanned real property from concept, acquisition, planning, authorization, construction, operation, and disposal to be one program. It became part of the Army program management plan and was published. It was then lectured at the Army War College and carried to all the major commands. There was a general consensus at TRADOC and FORSCOM in support. All real property funding was combined except for the operation and maintenance money, which was allocated to the post commander, who didn't want that money going someplace else. I can understand that.

The ACE's shop required definition to break out the Assistant Chief of Engineers' function. For policy and staff work we agreed that the ACE would work for the Chief, but for the military programs part, he'd report to the director of Military Programs. Major General Bill Wray had been the Assistant Chief of Engineers and became the first director of Military

Programs. So finally the civil works and military programs organizations were conceptually the same.

The last step then was to establish the Directorate of Engineering and Construction and, to some extent, operations to support the two program managers. That was yet to be done when I retired. There was in place a director of Military Programs, and a director of Civil Works with two major generals as program managers. I had expected Lloyd Duschka would head the third directorate. I don't know what happened after I retired. General [Joseph] **Bratton** never created the third directorate, but he changed the director of Military Programs to the director of Engineering and Construction with a major general in charge. Without saying it was good or bad, this arrangement was a diversion from the plan I had envisioned and the direction we were heading.

One of the by-products of the changes was that the ACE's shop became very big instead of being very small. I felt the ACE's shop should be kept very lean. I think in the long run the expansion led to the ACE's shop being dismantled as has now happened, but I don't know enough about it to be constructive.

So the organizational plan that I had in mind which worked very well under Bill Wray during the Israeli airfield job got off track. I do not want to make this record sound critical because I have no criticism of it. It's just that it was different from what I had thought we should have done.

To change the organization of the Corps of Engineers is a continuing major issue. Now, 16 years later, General Williams is still having agonies over this. Of course in the meantime, a couple of the Chiefs decided to get rid of some districts with the same bloody experience that I had. The current plan has not deleted any districts. They've changed the shape of them, but they haven't changed the number of them. To reorganize is a major, major undertaking, which creates a lot of turbulence and has adverse morale effects.

I really hope that all these other studies have led to improvements in each iteration to where we now have a plan that's suited to the times. I don't know if it is or not, but I hope that's what happens.

Now, inherent in the organization plan that I've discussed so far was this idea of getting OCE out of the operations business, and I've already mentioned what that did to the Humphreys Engineer Center. It also caused us to consolidate the Facilities Engineering Directorate into the Military Programs Directorate. So we actually saved a general's space, which we needed elsewhere.

We also began to realize that in some areas of the country the Corps was not going to be building any more major projects, so keeping the same structure at all the districts was becoming inappropriate. The question was, "How were we going to handle this change without closing down districts?"

We came to the obvious conclusion that we would tailor the districts to meet the requirements. The idea was that if a district didn't have any construction programs, it didn't need a construction division and possibly didn't need an engineering division. It needed a good operations division to run what they'd built and a planning division to take care of the studies they were doing and probably a little engineering and construction to help with these operational problems. Basically, we tailored the district to the need. That allowed us to put some lieutenant colonels in as district engineers. That gave us some command positions below the colonel level and it gave us a better training base to move up into district and division spots later.

In the process, Charleston was a district that we tailored. A couple of civilian employees started the rumor that we were going to close the district. Senator [Ernest] **Hollings** became upset and threatened to do something about the Army's budget for the M-1 tank. He began putting a lot of heat on the Chief of Staff.

I had General McGinnis [director of Civil Works] go over and talk to Senator Hollings. McGinnis came back after a rough session and said, "Don't you ever do that to me again." Senator Hollings remains a strong supporter of the Corps, but he's also very jealous about the Charleston District.

In the tailored district concept, we resolved quite a few issues. The nice thing about it was we didn't have to publicize it too much. The main thing noticed publicly was the fact we put lieutenant colonels in the districts instead of colonels. Occasionally we had to justify the change, but the rank didn't make that much difference apparently. We were able then to resize the districts down gradually, through attrition or other basis, and not cause a great deal of public reaction.

Of course, once you say you're going to tailor a district and you select out a few to be tailored and leave the others alone, you risk reaction; but if you do it as part of a logical and evolving business plan, it seems to work.

Before concluding our discussion of organization, I want to include a few points about the Huntsville Division. The Huntsville Division is an important element in the Corps' structure, although I admit to setting up a study group with the charge to determine its possible dissolution. This step taken early in my tenure as Chief proved convincingly that a separate division to address special and unique problems made more sense than the alternative approach to such issues. Huntsville's good work on the missile programs, management, training, postal program, special procurements, and other activities has substantiated the value of the division and completely reversed my initial thoughts.

Q: The headquarters moved to a different building while you were Chief, didn't it?

A: The move-yes.

One of President Carter's initiatives was to establish the Department of Energy. He selected Dr. James Schlesinger to be the first Secretary of Energy. Schlesinger had been Secretary of Defense. In that position he knew about the Forrestal Building. He apparently told President Carter he wanted the Forrestal Building for the Department of Energy. In any case, President Carter gave it to him. So then we had to figure out what to do next, and my hope was we could get a new building. We already acquired the land, some 600 acres at the Humphreys Engineer Center, and we had a master plan for developing that complex. It was moving along right about on schedule. We had planned three buildings there plus a museum.

I really wanted a new headquarters at the Humphreys Center, but at that time the Department of Defense was promoting a group of buildings, one of which was Buzzard's Point. I went over and looked at that and it wasn't big enough. I advised the Secretary of Defense's office that we would take that building at Buzzard's Point but I needed 50,000 square feet. There were only 25,000 available. The fact that I showed some interest in it at least was a plus and maybe put us in good standing when we asked for something else.

We looked at a lot of places and the only one of those that seemed to suit us was 20 Massachusetts Avenue. One of the minuses was its proximity to the Capitol. We felt the

White House wouldn't like that. That was an unfounded theory, or at least one that never surfaced.

Senator Stennis called up one day and asked me where we'd like to go. He indicated it was not his business but wanted to be sure the Corps was taken care of. I told him that we were looking at the Pulaski Building but I wasn't sure. He said to tell the House people who have the hearings first. Mr. Schlesinger had asked for something like \$17 million to remodel the Forrestal Building. So the day of that hearing I was called by Hunter **Spillen**, House Appropriations Committee, and asked what we wanted to do. I said we liked the Pulaski Building. That's when he asked me if we had a fall-back position and I said, "Well, yes, but let's not discuss it yet."

So when Schlesinger came over to the House committee to get his money, they indicated okay on his money but he had to give the Corps of Engineers the Pulaski Building. That's how that came about. Secretly, I'd hoped that they wouldn't be able to pull it off and then I was going to ask for the money for a new building.

I don't know if we would have gotten a new building had I put it up front or not. Anyhow, I thought if we asked for the Pulaski Building and didn't get it, then our case for a new building would be very strong. My belief at the time, I'm pretty sure, was that we had to at least be honest about the buildings that we could use, and the Pulaski was one of them. So we got it and then moved. That happened during 1979. General Bumell was the deputy by that time and was in charge of the move. I didn't have too much to do with the layout. Bob Blakeley was the true responsible planner.

Bumell picked a little office for himself. I remember looking at the plan. I said, "Bates, I don't think that's going to be satisfactory for the deputy. Why don't you put your office on the other side of the secretary." He said, "No, I want the deputy to be able to walk through a door into the Chief's office. I don't want to have to go across anybody's area to get there." I said, "Well, okay, if that's how you feel." I said, "The rest of it looks pretty good." We moved in June and early July.

Bob Blakeley also handled the physical part of the move and did an outstanding job. Bob was a strong asset to the Corps in so many ways over the years. You may remember he's the one who helped me get the air-conditioned vehicles when I was in Tulsa. Bob and I spent a lot of time together, and I just have the highest regard for him.

So we finally got ourselves into the Pulaski Building. I took my things over on the 4th of July, 1979.

The furniture in that office was brought over from the Forrestal Building. A professional decorator had done the executive suite at the Forrestal Building. When it was brought over to the Pulaski Building, it looked out of place. I kept the desk General Clarke had, a small, fairly modern desk with some chrome on it. That office in the Pulaski Building now has the traditional military furniture in it. It looks better.

Q: Okay, a quick follow-up?

A: Yes.

Q: We were going to come back to the subject, and I should have interrupted you earlier, about the relationship between the ACE and Military Programs and that new reorganization.

A: Yes. You mean the ACE's shop?

Q: Yes, the ACE's shop and Military Programs.



A: That was a tough problem. The Assistant Chief of Engineers basically is there to assist the Chief of Engineers on Army staff matters. If the Corps did not have a civil works program it would still need to have an Assistant Chief of Engineers. He might be called the deputy or something. Historically, an engineer battalion in an Army division had a division engineer, the battalion commander, and an assistant division engineer. The latter officer served at headquarters and responded to the division staff while the battalion commander ran his battalion. The ACE is the same concept and was understood within the Army.

At the Department of the Army level, the Assistant Chief of Engineers' office inherited many operational activities. We were able to list those duties which fell into purely the Assistant Chief of Engineers' business as the representative of the Chief. The rest fell under Military Programs.

Generally speaking, the overall management of the ACE's shop, except for purely staff actions, belonged to the director of Military Programs including items on the borderline.

The program worked well once in place, and if you talk to General Wray he'd probably agree.

Q: You have some additional observations on your selection as Chief.

A: I'd like to go back a little bit and pick up being selected for Chief of Engineers. I mentioned the luck involved in getting the job. In my case, being a little bit late getting through the grade of captain, for reasons I've already discussed, I was junior to two classmates who were exceptionally well qualified and, in my judgment, more likely to be selected.

However, they both left the service before the selection process commenced. One was Bill Glasgow, General William A. Glasgow, who had to retire for health reasons in 1969. He had been executive to General Wilson as Chief of Engineers. The other was Bob **Mathe**, Brigadier General Robert E. **Mathe**, who was the last engineer commissioner of the District of Columbia and also, I believe, the first member of the class of June 1943 to make general. Bob was exceptionally well qualified, based on outstanding performance all through his career; however, for personal reasons, he elected to retire in the late 1960s.

So those two better qualified candidates departed the service, cleared the way, and improved my chances for selection. When I was sworn in, both were present, and I did thank and congratulate them for their foresight in leaving the Army.

Another thing that happened that I would emphasize is the impact of all this on my wife and family. Being away in Vietnam for a year was one thing. They knew I was going to be away a year and they built their life accordingly; however, when I came back to Omaha and then to the Chief of Engineers' office, their life depended on my daily schedule more or less, which wasn't always predictable, convenient, or comfortable. In 1970, our son was at the Military Academy and our daughter had already graduated from the University of Connecticut and was teaching. So Gerry's life was considerably different during that period than it had been earlier when our children were at home.

She traveled with me as much as she could within the regulations and took a great interest in the Corps' roles. I think she probably visited more hydroelectric powerhouses and inspected more dams than any woman in the world.

The situation changed materially with the Chief of Engineers' job. Social requirements meant adapting our fairly private home lifestyle to the demands of the position. Such things as entertaining the wives of the Engineer Officers Advanced Course students, New Year's

reception, visiting officials, et cetera. Incidentally, we had moved to Fort **McNair** in January 1976 while I was still deputy on the assumption that we would be there until 30 June 1977.

The engineer wives affairs turned out quite nicely. Even now Gerry meets women who remember very well their visit to the Chief's house. Then, of course, there were the holiday events and visitors to Washington.

So I shouldn't pass through this period of my career without emphasizing the importance that Gerry played, not only in supporting me as I went along, but the requirements of my various assignments, especially the Chief of Engineers. No doubt the other occupants of her position have had a similar experience.

Q: In talking about becoming the Chief of Engineers, you mentioned the MacArthur Castles. You said at some point later you'd talk about Mrs. [Jean] MacArthur's reaction to the castles?

A: Colonel Joe Markel, retired, was a remarkable and highly regarded New Yorker. He was a lawyer who had served as a legal officer in the Corps of Engineers during World War II. He had a great love for the Corps of Engineers and was very active in the Society of American Military Engineers and in other defense matters.

One evening, he hosted an event in New York to honor Melvin Laird, the Secretary of Defense. A small receiving line included Mrs. Abrams-General Abrams had died by this time-Mrs. MacArthur, Secretary Laird, and me-plus Joe Markel, the host.

During the evening, Mrs. Abrams and I visited quite a bit about their trip to Fort Peck, which I covered earlier. She reiterated to me then that that was most pleasant and the last time that her husband and the family had vacationed together before he died.

Mrs. MacArthur, whom I had not met before, was a most charming and interesting lady. During our discussion, waiting for the event to begin, I removed one of the castles and handed it to her without explanation. She looked at it. "Oh, this belonged to the general," she said. I remember her saying "the general," because she never mentioned any other name.

I then explained to her how I happened to have them, and there followed a very pleasant discussion. Later, I got a note from her mentioning that she enjoyed being at the event and particularly enjoyed hearing about the castles, and she was happy to know they were being put to good use.

Q: But she recognized them right off.

A: Oh yes, immediately.

Q: We've discussed this a little before, but I wonder if it would be appropriate here to talk more about Blumenfeld as assistant secretary and those who followed. Is there any additional material you'd like to add about your relationship with these men, Secretaries Alexander and Blumenfeld? You did mention that Secretary Alexander had some things that he was particularly interested in. Affirmative action, I think, was one of those.

A: Well, we've covered my activities with the president pretty well. As for affirmative action, the secretary was very aggressive as described elsewhere. There were two other elements of the Executive Branch that demanded a lot of time, not just from the Chief of Engineers, but from the director of Civil Works as well. One was the OMB, and the other was the Secretary of the Army's office. I will mention OMB before I get to your question.

Having worked directly with the Office of Management and Budget so frequently when I was the director of Civil Works, I knew the people there. Initially, Bert Lance was President Carter's director of OMB; later, he was replaced by Jim McIntyre.

When the division engineers conferences were held in Washington, I tried to get an outside speaker who would be of interest and of value. On one occasion I invited Mr. Lance. He spoke to the division engineers in the conference room in the Forrestal Building.

It was an excellent event, and we carried on from there. Every time we'd have the division engineers conference in Washington, I would bring in someone from somewhere-including the Secretary of the Army.

To stay with OMB for a moment, there were people at OMB who were constantly looking for ways to save a few bucks on the taxpayers' expense account. I subscribed to that in general, but one of the things they got after was the magazine *Water Spectrum*. Joe Tofani had started *Water Spectrum* and it was a valuable magazine with a good subscription. It was very popular, widely read, and the articles were excellent.

That magazine, in the eyes of the OMB workers, seemed unnecessary. We were able to put them off, at least during my term, although subsequently, it has been stopped, I understand. Too bad. Joe Tofani created *Water Spectrum* and published it out of Civil Works. He wouldn't let the public affairs people have it, to start with because he didn't think they could suit the way he wanted it done. He may have been right.



*Chief of Engineers and Mrs. Morris cut a birthday cake on the 204th Corps anniversary in 1979.*

That was just one example of the constant pressures that OMB brought to bear on the office of Civil Works, and then, if the issues were important enough, the Chief of Engineers personally would become involved. Military programs activities involving OMB were handled by the Army staff at the Pentagon.

A similar situation was true with the Assistant Secretary for Civil Works, but the Chief's involvement was less frequent in that arena during my term in OCE. The Assistant Secretary for Civil Works, of course, is a political appointee, and he's under certain external pressures that neither the director of Civil Works nor the Chief of Engineers know about.

As covered in some detail in the section on my term as director of Civil Works, Victor Veysey built the office of **ASA/CW** with the help of Jack Ford. They did a good job in general and were followed by Mike Blumenfeld.

As Chief of Engineers, I didn't deal regularly with the Assistant Secretary for Civil Works; even so, I realized Blumenfeld was much different from Veysey. Veysey, a former congressman from California, was also an engineer who tended to get into the operations of the civil works program.

Blumenfeld, on the other hand, didn't have the same desire to run the Chief of Engineers' civil works affairs. He had a keen awareness of public interests and a very astute political mind. He was almost ideal for the job, in my judgment, because his primary purpose was to deal with the public, the Congress, and the Executive Branch on political matters.

He was followed by William Gianelli, another California engineer with excellent credentials in the water management field. I had retired by the time Gianelli came, so my thoughts about him are derived from infrequent and brief contact and observations. For all his good work, which was substantial and far reaching, he became quite possessive of the Corps' activities. Subsequent assistant secretaries seem to have only increased their inward management of the Corps rather than outward dealing with the political forces. Gianelli was known to deal directly with the district engineers, bypassing OCE and the division offices. I think Bill slowed the decision-making process and brought the Chief more directly into **ASA/CW** operations than appropriate.

Bob Dawson followed Gianelli. I knew Bob very well and saw a lot of him even though I had retired. He called all the Chiefs in the **D.C.** area, plus General Graves, and asked us to give him a hand getting the Water Resources Act of 1986 passed. Bob had been an administrative assistant in the Congress and certainly knew his way around the Hill. I thought Bob paid attention to the political winds quite well. He got the 1986 bill through to his great credit. I give Bob good grades. He was very serious, very conscientious about his job, and since he's left the service-the federal service-he's stayed in closer contact with the Corps than any of his predecessors-quite loyal.

My only reservation was that I thought he subordinated, perhaps unknowingly, the position of the Chief of Engineers by taking General Heiberg with him on trips when I think he should have taken the director of Civil Works. The Chief is big enough to stand alone. Besides, the Chief has more things to do than just civil works. I must admit he and General Heiberg made a very strong and effective team. Vald Heiberg was the director of Civil Works when I retired and a great presence for the Corps.

Bob Page was good. Bob was an **engineer**—an understanding engineer. He instituted some procedures which put the Corps in good stead: the educational arrangement at Huntsville between the University of Alabama and the Corps, an outgrowth of the study of Corps training mentioned earlier; the CPAR [Construction Productivity Advancement Research]

program, exchanging technical information between the laboratories and industries. I had promoted this initiative, but it took somebody like Bob Page to get it done. The third thing, of course, he drew on his construction background to install project management throughout all levels of the Corps' organization - an expensive change which to me had questionable value above the district level. So Bob was the last ASAKW with whom I had much contact.

I met Mrs. [Nancy] Dom, his successor, and went to see her about setting up the **Army Engineer Association**, which I'll cover later.

Ed Dickey assisted Mrs. Dom and became acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Works on her departure. He's well steeped in the Corps because he was directly a long-time member of the Army Liaison Staff in OCE, which predates ASAKW Veysey. Ed is presently in OCE as Chief of Planning.

In hindsight, that whole group of **ASA/CWs** is interesting because they were all so different with different priorities. First, an engineer ex-congressman, followed in turn by a **business-type** administrator, a water resources manager, an ex-staffer and Washington insider, a successful construction manager, a lady attorney, and finally another ex-congressman. Their diverse talents and varying knowledge of the public works program have impeded the Corps' flexibility and decisiveness. At the same time, they have been helpful politically and in promoting the program publicly. On balance, professional engineers are the most bothersome as **ASA/CW**, to the Corps' operation and nonengineer, ex-congressmen are most helpful politically.

If General Clarke asked me today for my assessment of the position of ASAKW, I would have to admit the Corps appears weaker in the eyes of decision makers, and the Congress, particularly. Even so, I'd respond favorably with reservations or hopes for improvement. I'd like an **ASA/CW** who looks outward, not inward in the "how to perform" department. Also, I'd hope the ASAKW would be a political activist in resolving matters which, by legislation or by DOD or DA [Department of Defense or Department of the Army] directive, adversely impact the civil works mission (to wit, the acquisition corps/contracting officer matter), and finally I would hope the **ASA/CW** would be a positive spokesperson for the great work the Corps has done and can do.

One observation is my belief that only a solid, well-disciplined organization such as the Corps could remain so viable and effective after over 20 years of oversight and control by such a diverse and divergent group.

Q: You mentioned a contracting officer problem-could you elaborate a bit?

I was speaking of **ASA/CW's** help when needed. A current [1996] example is the policy which prohibits district engineers from being contracting officers unless they transfer to the Acquisition Branch. The Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works should get in the middle of that fray and get it unraveled for the national good because the Corps' public works effort is a victim of a procurement program related to weapons, and not to construction.

When the colonels and the lieutenant colonels stop being contracting officers, I'm concerned that the new people handling contracts won't know about the business, causing contract difficulties and costs to increase and work progress to worsen. The district engineer becomes less important. The fact of the matter is it has taken away a major strength of the district engineer position and impacts on the need for military personnel in the program.

There has never been any problem with the district engineer performing as contracting agent. I think in the whole history of the Corps, there's only been one district engineer that failed or mismanaged. The Corps is recognized and renowned worldwide for its manner of handling contracts.

I can tell you, since I've retired, I've heard more complaints about the Corps' contracting attitude than I ever heard before, and I think it's because the people who are managing contracts aren't communicating with the contractor like the district engineers can and would. I hope I am wrong, but it forebodes major problems for the Chief of Engineers when the district engineers are no longer allowed to be contracting officers.

So the assistant secretary must become involved and if necessary get support of the Secretary of the Army. I consider it a crucial issue in both military and civil programs but more so in the latter.

Q: Let me ask you one follow-up question. In recent years, the Corps has also had much more to do with the Assistant Secretary for Installations, Logistics, and Environment. In the 1970s, I think maybe it was just Installation and Logistics. During your term, did you have a lot of contact with the other assistant secretaries?

A: Yes, we did, but we were talking about the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works. I haven't gotten into the military programs yet. Maybe we should now. I don't want to give the impression civil was more important to me as Chief than military. It definitely was not.

I spent a great portion of my term as deputy, and later as Chief, in consolidating the management of the Army military real property. During that period, because the **ASA/I&L** [Assistant Secretary of the Army for Installations and Logistics] had given up housing, there wasn't quite as much business with that office.

Now, we did deal with **ASA/I&L** on the environment until the Assistant Secretary for Civil Works established a position that managed environmental problems for the Army. We continued to work with **ASA/I&L** on equipment and other post issues, but not as much as today, where **ASA/I&L** is more involved in post operations.

Of the two, even though there was no lack of interest on my part for the military program, the Assistant Secretary for Civil Works was the more dominant of those two insofar as the Corps business was concerned. That situation could have easily changed; however, we need to recognize there is the entire Army staff directly below **ASA/I&L** which provided the appropriate avenue for the Chief of Engineers in issues involving the **ASA/I&L**.

Q: Is now a good time to talk about **Secretary** Alexander's concerns?

A: Yes, of course, we got off track again on your earlier question, but first I should mention my first **secretary**—Martin Hoffman. I was amazed at the man's energy and his ability to deal with problems.

Hoffman and General Rogers, Chief of Staff of the Army, made a good team. Secretary Hoffman asked the Chief of Engineers to arrange a trip so he could see what civil works was all about. He went to Lock and Dam 26, which was a very hot potato politically in those days.

When he came back, he was a very helpful secretary because he'd seen the project. We've worked together since I've retired. He remains a very dynamic and personable man. I don't know how he was to work for, but he was very good to work with.

The only confrontation I had with him had to do with a racial issue in Mobile District. Colonel Drake Wilson was the district engineer, and I received a call one day from the secretary's office about a latrine which had "black" and "white" signs on it.

Secretary Hoffman asked me to come over and see him about this report. I asked for a little time to get back to him. It turned out that it was true. It was an abandoned building which had not been in use for some time. Colonel Wilson had it tom down at once.

So I went back to the secretary, and I explained all of this to him, and he indicated we would have to take our lumps on this one. That was that.

In January 1976 he was replaced by Clifford Alexander. Alexander also was an astute politician. He carried the equal rights program every place he went. That was a top item on his list of things to do.

There was a sincere ongoing effort by the Corps to resolve the racial issues, but Secretary Alexander made sure. He came to our division engineers conference in the Land Between the Lakes, Kentucky, raked the Corps very hard, and told those present what he expected in strong terms.

If Alexander intended to make an impact on the Corps leaders he was successful. Having him attend the conference was good because he saw the division engineers and staffs discuss politically sensitive issues, criticize each other, and try to find the right answers. He saw the committees working on current problems and on long-range objectives. So it was good for him to come, but he did give us a strong and critical message, which everyone remembers.

My association with Alexander, though, improved. Improved may not be the right word. It matured, because it started off with each not knowing the other and having to get acquainted, and there were some uncertainties following my meeting with President Carter.

I didn't know his priorities initially. So we had several meetings early on, and shortly after he came in, he again brought up the toilet problem in the Mobile district. The same people who had raised the matter with Secretary Hoffman had apparently brought it to Alexander's attention, not reporting that the thing had been destroyed.

When he brought it up, I mentioned having been down this trail already with his predecessor. I assured him there was nothing there.

He seemed to appreciate the advice I had given him on the way to the White House about the hit lists, and the dam safety inspection program was handled with some political correctness.

In a matter of weeks after that, Lock and Dam 26 surfaced as a critical issue, and Secretary of Transportation Brock Adams wanted to make another study.

Secretary Alexander made an appointment to go see Secretary Adams and asked me if I'd come along. I remember I didn't think we needed another study, and I was sure we could not have other elements of the government making a study of our projects. If there was to be a study made, it should be done by the responsible agency, and that was the Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Engineers. So the Army just had to stand tough on that with Secretary Brock Adams.

So he did. Secretary Alexander handled that very well. I thought it was the end of the deal, but it wasn't. I didn't realize that Alexander had agreed to take 18 months to do a re-evaluation.. In the meantime, work would be delayed. I wrote a letter to the secretary explaining that we'd never brought up the subject of safety before, but this project was in bad

shape physically, and we just didn't need to wait another 18 months while a study was being made. To me there was a time beyond which we shouldn't go with the present structure. It may be 18 months, it may be 18 years, but the dam was in bad shape, and we should get it replaced quickly.

I mentioned the word "safety" in that letter, and it upset him because one of the president's personal priorities was to emphasize dam safety to avoid more dam failures.

Secretary Alexander called me over to make this point personally. I admired him for that, in hindsight. We had quite a discussion. My point was simply that I didn't know anything about the 18 months, and that if he felt he had to go with 18 months, I would support it, but that as his engineer I desired a chance to present a position on engineering matters prior to commitment.

I don't want this to sound like it was aknockdown-dragout, but that was the essence of it. He respected my position, and from then on, we never had a problem.

He became the Corps' most ardent supporter when the issue of reorganizing the Executive Branch arose. I can't overstate how supportive he was, and how outspoken he was in defense of the Corps. We couldn't have had a better advocate than Secretary Alexander. From my view he and I had an unusually constructive arrangement. That's not to say that we always agreed, but we always could communicate.

Other persons that we haven't talked about were the Chiefs of Staff, the military bosses. I had two Chiefs of Staff. One was General Bernard W. Rogers and then E. C. Meyer. Understandably, they were both very strong individuals. As mentioned previously Rogers and I were classmates, so I'd known him a long time. He was a principal in the Corps' becoming a major command. He and Mr. Hoffman got along so well-that whole arrangement between the Chief of Staff and the Secretary of the Army, as far as I was concerned, was very comfortable.

The Corps had some problems that involved the Chief of Staff Charleston District and Senator Hollings for example.

Then we had the blizzard in Buffalo while Dan Ludwig was the Buffalo District engineer. I heard about troops being sent to Buffalo on the TV one morning. At the Chief of Staff's meeting that same morning, I mentioned the fact that when the troops arrived up there, they were going to be working for a Corps of Engineers colonel. It would be nice if he knew who was coming since the Corps of Engineers was in charge of the emergency snow removal and so forth. We were, thereafter, to my recollection.

Secretary Alexander, in reviewing the documentation to support the Corps' becoming a major command, was impressed with the responsibilities of the Chief of Engineers and unbeknownst to me, had decided that he would support making the Chief of Engineers a four-star position. Since Rogers was leaving, Alexander decided he'd wait until General Meyer came in.

Meyer came to see me on the 7th of December 1979 for a briefing. The four-star subject did not come up. Three weeks later, Secretary Alexander apparently indicated he would like to get the Chief of Engineers' position elevated to four stars. Meyer seemed very upset with me about that because I didn't mention it to him in early December.

The truth of the matter is this whole thing about getting the position upgraded was handled with Morelli because they didn't want me to be involved in it. Unfortunately, we got trapped a little bit. General Meyer told the secretary he didn't want to do it. I believe the job has